

CARTSNEWS

The Official Journal of the Carolina Token Society

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

For those with us for the first time, this newsletter is going out free for one year. Our goal is to create a new club for collectors of tokens from the Carolinas.

The good news is that one person sent a corrected address with **good wishes** for the success of CARTS; six (6) new people asked to be **added to our mailing list**; and we received **classified ads from 1 new person**. So, CARTS is well received and growing – maybe. I suppose we will not know for sure how the organization is doing until we ask for dues.

To keep (or get) the ball rolling we need your feedback, on one idea in particular. If a meeting were held in early November in some central location – like perhaps Rock Hill, SC – would you likely attend?

There would be no cost to you other than travel and motel room – if you stayed overnight. We would rent a conference

room with tables at some motel, and from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM we would swap, buy, sell, talk, and enjoy TOKENS! This can only happen if a significant number of us think it a good idea and are likely to attend. Let us know. Here again is the contact information. Notice that the email address for Don Bailey is new.

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Comments, suggestions, reactions, criticism (maybe) gratefully accepted. Let us know! **Articles, New Finds, Announcements, and Classifieds to Don Bailey only!**

THE CLIFFSIDE MILLS STORE(s)

Don Bailey

The Cliffside Mills Store began, pretty much simultaneously with the town of Cliffside, NC. The town and the Mill were still under construction in 1900 when a commissary was established in a cotton warehouse. Mr. Z. O. Jenkins was manager

of the store from its beginning and held that position until 1919, when he became secretary-treasurer of Cliffside Mills. (He was succeeded by Mr. B. D. Wilson.) This commissary supplied the needs of those constructing the mill, and later of those who worked in the mill. (It is interesting that just as sales people are now called “associates” the early records refer to the mill workers as “operatives” - a rather dignified name in my view.) Soon the make-shift commissary was not sufficient to the needs of the town, and in 1902 a large two-story frame structure was erected. This building saw a steady growth in the volume of business

handled by the store and in 1909 it too became inadequate to the needs of the village and surrounding community. (Sadly, I have been able to locate no picture of the 1900 commissary. Likewise I can locate no photo of the 1909 frame building.)



Cliffside Mills (main) Store in the early 1920's

In February of 1909 the store was moved to a new structure which, for its time, was grand indeed. The new store was made of brick, 110 feet square, and three stories in height (counting a basement which was at street level in the rear). In 1922 a newspaper asserted that "The building is splendidly arranged and lighted and is equipped with the most modern devices known for the convenient handling of good merchandise. The front is of plate glass and contains large display windows which are kept attractively filled with the latest styles at all times".

By 1922, at least, there were three branch or satellite stores. They were established at convenient locations in Cliffside. (Remember that most people walked everywhere at this time.) They were the North Main Street store, to the north; the Fairview store, to the east; and the River View store, to the south. Each of these stores was approximately 1 mile from the main store. The river was to the west, so the town did not extend in that direction.

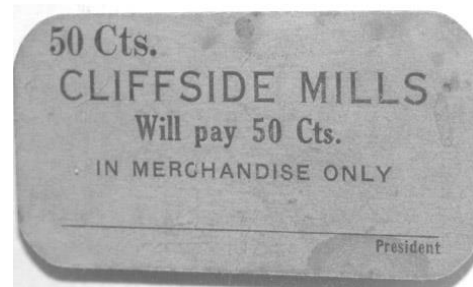
The (main) Cliffside Mills Store was a great deal more general than the average general store. There was a "dry goods" department that had its own millinery department "located at the rear of the store with Miss Evelyn Pusey of Baltimore, in charge." A newspaper of the period says "This department sets the pace in styles for this section of the county and caters to a very select trade."

There was a grocery department, a hardware department, a meat department in the basement with "a large stock of heavy and fancy groceries", a furniture store (which also sold fertilizers, building materials and farming implements), and a drug department with "a

modern fountain ... which serves the public with all the late drinks".

The Tokens:

The tokens of the Cliffside Mills store are rectangular, made of cardboard, and exist in denominations of 5¢ (pink), 10¢ (yellow), 25¢ (blue), 50¢ (red) and \$1.00 (green).



Cliffside Mills 50¢ token of Red Cardboard 62mm by 32mm. Obviously the one shown is not valid since it is unsigned.

We are fortunate to have the reminiscence of Charles Terrell Freeman, who worked in the mill at Cliffside for a time around 1905. With regard to the Cliffside Mills tokens Mr. Freeman reports as follows: "Cliffside had checks in the denominations of five, ten, twenty-five, fifty cents, and one dollar. You could draw on your time and trade it out between pay days. He (*Mr. Haynes, secretary and treasurer of Cliffside Mills*) required each family to draw out most of their pay in checks so that he would know they were trading at the company store. He sold every thing any one would need. All prices were in line with stores elsewhere and many articles were cheaper; and he saw to it that we took advantage of it. I had a brother living there and he decided to pay cash and not draw out checks, so after about three months Mr. Haynes went to him and told him that he noticed he was not drawing out checks. Brother told him 'No I am not, but I am trading at the company store'. Haynes told him that he must draw out checks so that he would know that he was trading at the company store. My brother quit and moved to another town. The company furnished houses rent free so when you quit you have to move out immediately."

References:

1. *The Forest City Courier*, June 29, 1922
2. www.remembercliffside.com/familystories/freeman/fa_family_charles_freeman.html
3. Personal communication from Jerry Roughton, January 1997
4. Personal communication with Phillip Moore.

HARD TIMES IN OLYMPIA MILL VILLAGE

Tony Chibbaro

Over the years I have often heard certain hard-core token collectors say that they would “kill” to obtain a particularly sought-after token for their collections. I must admit that I have even been guilty of such hyperbole. In my experience, thankfully, such remarks have always been made in jest. The other day, however, I came across a story in a local history text which related the account of a man being killed in an argument over tokens.

The book, entitled *Lintheads* and written by Alvin W. Byars, is a compilation of tales and recollections of life in the Olympia cotton mill village in Columbia, SC. The story that caught my eye was dubbed *Hard Times Acomin'* and related the details of the demise of B.B. Armbruster, an overworked and underpaid operative at Olympia Mills.

It seems that Armbruster often took advantage of the payroll advance system that was made available by the mill's management. The system, the same as that utilized by many other cotton mills across the Southeast, worked like this. If an employee ran out of money before regular payday and had already worked a certain amount of hours in the current pay period, he could request an advance against wages owed him. In some South Carolina mills, this request was termed “looneying out,” a reference to the looneys (tokens) which were tendered to the worker in the place of cash. The tokens were usually dispensed by the mill's cashier or his underling and the amount was then deducted from the pay the employee would receive later on payday. The tokens, of course, could only be spent at the company store.

Apparently after one particular payday, Armbruster had questions about the amount that had been deducted from his paycheck. He went to the mill office and confronted

Adam Hopewell, the “check man” (another reference to tokens), who was the mill employee in charge of disbursing the tokens. Armbruster told Hopewell that too many tokens had been deducted from his account and he expected rectification in the form of more money. Hopewell stood by his figures and the discussion deteriorated into a heated argument. Armbruster then stormed out of the office, remarking to Hopewell that “you or me will go to hell before dark.”

Hopewell must have taken heed of the thinly-veiled threat, as later in the day he was prepared when confronted by Armbruster a second time. This final encounter occurred in the middle of Indigo Avenue, the broad thoroughfare that ran in front of both Olympia Mills and nearby Granby Mills. The two argued fiercely again and the dispute quickly escalated into a scuffle. Gunshots suddenly rang out, Armbruster staggered away from Hopewell's grasp, fell onto the streetcar tracks, and died.

Now, over a hundred years later, the Olympia Mill building sits vacant as a silent monument to Armbruster's passing. Much has changed in the immediate area. Both the Olympia Mill building and the Granby Mill building are awaiting renovation as condominiums. Indigo Avenue has been renamed Whaley Street, in honor of the founder of the mill. And the mill store building has been replaced by a gas station.



Fortunately, tokens remain so that collectors can be reminded of the hard lives of the mill operatives. Two different types exist that were utilized in the mill store at Olympia. Neither one mentions Olympia Mills, however. That's because the mill store was never actually owned by the mill itself. The first company store was called the Mills Avenue Store and it was located right across the street from Olympia Mills at 701 Indigo Avenue. It operated between 1902 and 1905 and the principal owner was W.B. Lowrance, a prominent local businessman who was a member of the Board of Directors of Olympia Mills and also one of its chief stockholders. As far as tokens are concerned,

there is only a single specimen known from this store at present.



The name of the store was changed to Granby Mercantile Company, but it operated in the same building as the Mills Avenue Store. Tokens are also known from this business endeavor. Fortunately for collectors, their tokens are not as rare as those of the previous establishment. Both 1¢ and 5¢ denominations are known. Specimens of the 1¢ denomination are scarce, but can be located if one is patient and diligent. Only a single example of the 5¢ denomination is presently known to collectors.

In 1906, the store was sold. Its new principal owner, J.S. Moore, was also general manager of Granby Mills.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR TRADE

NORTH AND SOUTH CAROLINA EXONUMIA AVAILABLE FOR TRADE for needed Georgia exonumia – including tokens, Masonic pennies, encased coins, etc. Randy Partin, 1314 Keystone Pointe, Auburndale, FL 33823, (863) 965-2947 EMAIL: RPAR10@GATE.NET

FOR SALE

10 DIFFERENT MERCHANT TOKENS, \$10.00; 20 different, \$19.00. 15 different pieces of coal scrip, \$15.00. **All Offers Postpaid.** Ken Chylinski, Box 66, St. Clair, MI 48079.

JUST PRINTED - NEW *THIRD SUPPLEMENT TO SOUTH CAROLINA TOKENS* lists over 200 new finds. 37 pages, scores of illustrations, \$8.00 ppd. Send check to: Tony Chibbaro, PO Box 420, Prosperity, SC 29127. Will also accept paypal: CHIBBARO@MINDSPRING.COM

WANTED

TOKENS FROM PLANTERS (and other) PEANUT COMPANY WANTED. I'm looking for ANY peanut company tokens. Sell me examples or send me descriptions. Don Bailey, PO Box 1272, Etowah, NC 28729 or ELADON@BELLSOUTH.NET

WANT TO EXCHANGE MAVERICK LISTS. Will send a list of my mavericks for your list. Both parties reveal attributions if any. Bob King 33 Cardinal Dr. Brevard, NC 28712 828-883-8028 TOKENADDICT@CITCOM.NET

WANTED INPUT FROM READERS. Send articles, new finds, classifieds, letters to the editor, book reviews, announcements. This venture can succeed only if there is interest and response from **you**. Editor